

Monomoy National Wildlife Refuge



June 7 – 13, 2015 [Issue 5]

Photo Credit: USFWS/Claire Revekan

A Message from Monomoy

Although the last couple of weeks have been characterized by fog, rain, and wind, the sounds of peeping chicks and the bustling of summer vacationers are bringing life to the Refuge! American oystercatcher nests continue to hatch, PIPL chicks have doubled in number, and new birds have been sighted. Plover tagging continued this week and HSC tagging is expected to occur next week.

On 6/10 & 6/11, the Refuge conducted its annual tern census in the colony! Preliminary counts show over 8500 nests, with more detailed numbers to come. We would like to thank all of the volunteers who aided in the completion of this task. We could not have done it without you.

2015 Field Season Update

This is a weekly synopsis of biological activities on South Monomoy, North Monomoy, and Minimoy Islands. Information within this report is subject to change. For up to date information, please contact Refuge Staff.

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Photo of the Week



Photo Credit: USFWS/Peter Paton

Bird Sightings

Double-crested cormorant
Ring-billed gull
Iceland gull
Bonaparte's gull
Killdeer
Willet
Great yellowlegs
Black-crowned night heron
Whimbrel
Barn swallow
Tree swallow
Least sandpiper
Ruddy turnstone
Killdeer
Black-bellied plover
Semipalmated plover
Semipalmated sandpiper
Short-billed dowitcher
Red Knot (6/7)
Sanderling
Dunlin
White-winged scoter
Black Scoter
Common eider
Red-breasted merganser

Blue-winged teal
Green-winged teal (6/12)
Gadwall
American black duck
Mallard
Northern Gannet
Horned lark
Saltmarsh sparrow
Magnolia warbler
Common yellowthroat
Yellow Warbler (6/12)
American goldfinch
Gray catbird
Song Sparrow
Savannah sparrow (6/12)
Eastern towhee
Eastern kingbird
Turkey vulture
Peregrine falcon
Bald eagle
Northern Harrier
Osprey
Red-winged blackbird
American bittern (6/12)
Virginia Rail (6/12)

Bird Activity

Piping Plovers (PIPL)

42 active PIPL pairs were documented on the Refuge at the end of the week, with 16 active nests on South Monomoy. Nest hatching went into full swing with 10 nests hatching, bringing the total number of broods to 20, and a combined 48 chicks between them! Three PIPL nests were lost this week; one to suspected coyote predation and two to abandonment.

Staff will continue to monitor nests/broods and nest search for re-nests.

American Oystercatchers (AMOY)

Chicks continue to hatch for the remaining AMOY nests this week! On 6/7, the first nest on North Monomoy hatched with three chicks. With the six chicks between three broods seen on South Monomoy, the count now stands as nine chicks seen on the Refuge. Other pairs are suspected of having chicks based on parental behavior.

Minimoy and North Monomoy were not checked this week. Four active nests remain with two on North Monomoy, one on Minimoy, and one on South Monomoy. After several breeding pairs lost their A nests a couple weeks ago, staff expects B nests to be laid sometime this week or next week.

Common Terns (COTE)

Staff and volunteers conducted tern census on 6/10 & 6/11 with a raw count of over 8500 pairs! During this time, the first COTE chick was found in the colony with several more hatching by the end of the week. Census numbers will have to be adjusted using Lincoln Index. More detailed information and numbers will be provided once it becomes available.

Staff started checking eggs and banding chicks in productivity plots on 6/12. Eight-seven chicks have been banded so far with more on the way! All plots continue to be checked daily, but will switch to A and B plots on 6/14.

On 6/8, 6 banded COTEs were trapped, bringing the total number of recaps to 13 adults. Additionally, five more unbanded mates were trapped and banded and two PFRs were read.

Roseate Terns (ROST)

South Monomoy holds firm with 11 ROST nests in the colony. Staff notes a lone ROST near the south sound system and continues to

monitor its behavior for signs of breeding during day stints.

On 6/12, an egg was found missing from R1 for unknown reasons. Staff will continue to monitor the nest for further signs of egg loss.

Least Terns (LETE)

Staff hopes to conduct LETS census next week.

Laughing Gulls (LAGU)

LAGU nests were counted during tern census on 6/10 & 6/11. This year, the Refuge decided to factor in error (nests initially missed) to the raw count for a more accurate count of LAGU pairs nesting in the colony. More information will follow in next week's issue.

Roseate habitat restoration Project

New new information to report.

Nanotag Project

On 6/12, Mass Audubon and Refuge staff continued efforts in tagging seven PIPLs; five on South Beach and two on South Monomoy. So far, 19 PIPLs have been tagged in MA. Staff hopes to deploy the remaining six nanotags in the coming weeks and have prospected nests outside of the 1km radio tower buffer to do so.

Exclosure Study

Staff welcome lead researcher, Abby Darrah on 6/12. Abby is aiding in plover nest/chick checks on South Monomoy.

Salt Marsh Integrity

Due to logistical difficulties, staff plans to continue reading SETs in the fall.

Current & Upcoming Events

Plover Census Window

June 1-9

COTE/ROST Census

June 9-10

HSC Tagging

June 2, 3, 16, 17

& July 2

Staff Retreat

June 23

June 2015

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				